

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07604

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, IO UK

SUBJECT : UK OFFICIAL HINTS THAT UK MAY BE PREPARED TO
AGREE TO EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA BEFORE U.S. FUNDING
PROCEDURE COMPLETED

1. ON JUNE 14 WE TOOK JOHN FOSTER, NEW PRESS OFFICER
NEW DELHI, TO MEET ROBERT CORMACK OF FCO. MAIN SUBJECT
OF DISCUSSION WAS JOURNALISTS VISITS BUT CORMACK ALSO
SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT UK MIGHT BE
ABLE TO GIVE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO EXPANSION PROGRAM
BEFORE FALL. CORMACK SAID THAT AD REFERENDUM AGREEMENT
WORKED OUT BY US/UK NEGOTIATORS IN FEBRUARY IS WENDING
ITS WAY UP TO MINISTERS AND THAT TONE OF RECOMMENDATION
IS FOR UK TO AGREE IN PRINCIPLE WITH U.S. ON EXPANSION
OF DIEGO GARCIA FACILITY ON BASIS OF AD REFERENDUM AGREE-
MENT BUT CONDITIONAL UPON USG RECEIVING FUNDS FROM CON-
GRESS FOR PROJECT.

2. CORMACK SAID THAT THINKING IN FCO WAS THAT UK MIGHT
BE READY TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT SOMETIME IN AUGUST WHEN
PARLIAMENT IS NOT IN SESSION. HE CAUTIONED THAT HE CAN-
NOT PREDICT WHAT MINISTERS WILL DO ON THIS CASE AND RE-
QUESTED THAT HE BE CAREFULLY PROTECTED AS SOURCE THIS
SPECULATION.

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3. POINT WAS MADE IN CONTEXT OF CORMACK'S EXPLANATION TO FOSTER OF REASON FCO WANTS TO DELAY JOURNALISTS VISIT TO DIEGO GARCIA. CORMACK SAID THAT OFFICIALS HOPE THAT VISIT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THIS AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE IS ANNOUNCED.

4. THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE HELD CLOSELY TO PREVENT JEOPARDIZING EARLY UK AGREEMENT. WE REQUEST IT NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH OTHER UK OFFICIALS UNLESS WE RECEIVE OTHER INDICATIONS THAT THIS LINE OF ACTION IS PROCEEDING IN FCO. WE ALSO REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON CORMACK'S SUGGESTION THAT US AND UK MIGHT REACH AND ANNOUNCE FURTHER AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON DETAILS OF EXPANSION WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT AGREEMENT WOULD BECOME FINAL WITH CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF FUNDING.

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